

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
USMISSION USNATO

C O N F I D E N T I A L MADRID 00138

BRUSSELS FOR USEEC

E.O. 11652 - XGDS-1
TAGS: PINT, SP
SUBJECT: BASQUE PRE-AUTONOMY STATUTE: PNV AND PSOE
REQUEST CLARIFICATION

REF: MADRID 0023

1. SUMMARY: THE PNV AND BASQUE PSOE HAVE CALLED ON UCD
AND THE GOVT TO CONFIRM THAT A SIMPLE MAJORITY IS ALL
THAT WILL BE REQUIRED IN THE PROPOSED NAVARRESE REFEREN-
DUM FOR INCORPORATION INTO THE BASQUE REGION TO BE
APPROVED. IT WAS AGREED, THEY SAY, THAT A SIMPLE
MAJORITY WOULD DECIDE THE ISSUE, ALTHOUGH SUCH A PRO-
VISION WAS NOT EXPLICITLY INCLUDED IN THE STATUTE.END SUM.
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2. MADRID'S "EL PAIS" REPORTS ON JAN. 5 THAT THE BASQUE
NATIONALIST PARTY (PNV) AND BASQUE PSOE HAVE DRAFTED A
TOUGH COMMUNIQUE CALLING ON UCD AND THE GOVT TO CLARIFY
THEIR POSITION ON THE PROVISIONS OF THE PRE-AUTONOMY
STATUTE (REFTEL) CONCERNING NAVARRE'S INCORPORATION IN THE
BASQUE REGION. SPECIFICALLY, PNV LEADER CARLOS GARAICO-

ECHEA TOLD "EL PAIS" THAT "WE ARE PREPARED TO TAKE GRAVE DECISIONS" IF THE GOVT AND UCD DO NOT CONFIRM THAT A SIMPLE MAJORITY IN THE PROPOSED NAVARRESE REFERENDUM WILL BE SUFFICIENT TO APPROVE INCORPORATION.
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3. AMCONSUL BILBAO, WHO SPOKE BY TELEPHONE WITH GARAICO-ECHEA ON JAN. 5, ADVISES THAT THE SHIFT FROM INITIAL PNV/PSOE APPROVAL OF THE STATUTE TO THE CURRENT GRUMBLING WAS PRECIPITATED BY AN INTERVIEW WITH CONTROVERSIAL UCD NAVARRESE SENATOR JAIME IGNACIO DEL BURGO PUBLISHED JAN. 3 IN A PAMPLONA NEWSPAPER. IN THAT INTERVIEW, DEL BURGO WAS QUOTED AS SAYING THAT, CONTRARY TO ASSERTIONS BY THE PNV AND PSOE, THERE WAS "ABSOLUTELY NO AGREEMENT" THAT A SIMPLE MAJORITY IN THE REFERENDUM WOULD SUFFICE ON THE QUESTION OF INCORPORATION. DEL BURGO REPORTEDLY REFUSED TO BE MORE EXPLICIT, SIMPLY IMPLYING THAT SOMETHING MORE THAN A SIMPLE MAJORITY WOULD BE NECESSARY, AND REITERATED THE PROVISION OF THE DECREE-LAW ON THE REFERENDUM, TO THE EFFECT THAT IT WOULD BE CARRIED OUT "IN A MANNER TO BE DETERMINED BY THE NAVARRE PROVINCIAL GOVT AND THE CENTRAL GOVT IN MADRID" (REFTEL).

4. EVEN THOUGH DEL BURGO'S FELLOW UCD SENATOR FROM NAVARRE, JOSE GABRIEL SARARA, STATED IN A PRESS INTERVIEW ON JAN. 4 THAT A SIMPLE MAJORITY WAS INDEED WHAT HAD BEEN AGREED
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UPON, THE PNV AND PSOE UNDERSTANDABLY WANT TO HEAR SUCH ASSURANCES FROM THE UCD LEADERSHIP OR, PREFERABLY, THE GOVT ITSELF. THE PNV AND PSOE, HAVING LOST THE BATTLE ON THE QUESTION OF THE REFERENDUM (WHICH THEY PREFERRED TO AVOID ALTOGETHER), AND REALIZING THAT NAVARRE IS DEEPLY AND QUITE POSSIBLY CLOSELY DIVIDED ON THE INCORPORATION ISSUE, ARE HIGHLY UNLIKELY TO ACCEPT ANY REQUIREMENT FOR MORE THAN A SIMPLE MAJORITY, EVEN MORE SO IF DEL BURGO'S REPORTED STATEMENTS REPRESENT A POST-AGREEMENT SHIFT IN THE GOVT/UCD POSITION.

5. IT IS NOT CLEAR WHETHER THE REPORTED DRAFT COMMUNIQUE WILL ACTUALLY SEE THE LIGHT OF DAY, OR IF THE LEAKING OF SUCH A PUTATIVE DRAFT WAS ALL THE PNV AND PSOE HAD IN MIND, AT LEAST FOR NOW (WE NOTE THAT THE PSOE, UNLIKE THE PNV, HAS NOT YET RAISED THE CRY). IN ANY EVENT, GARAICO-ECHEA TOLD AMCONSUL BILBAO THAT HE CONSIDERED THE NEXT MOVE UP TO THE GOVT.

6. COMMENT: WE DO NOT BELIEVE THE GOVT WOULD ALLOW REFERENDUM MATHEMATICS TO MAKE NAVARRE ANY MORE OF AN APPLE OF DISCORD IN THE BASQUE EQUATION THAN IT ALREADY

IS. EATON

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